



November 2, 2017

Chairman Ajit Pai
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW,
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Pai,

On behalf of the undersigned organizations representing Kansas beneficiaries of the E-Rate program, we write to express our strong support for the E-Rate program and the affordable access it makes available to our state's schools and libraries and the students they serve. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) oversees E-Rate, which connects schools and libraries to broadband. When established in 1996, just 14 percent of the nation's classrooms had access to the internet. In the 2014 modernization, the FCC raised the E-Rate program's spending cap to better meet school and library demand for connectivity, which was only growing. E-Rate remains the federal government's largest educational technology program and is the third largest source of support for schools when compared to K-12 programs under the US Education Department. In Kansas, E-Rate is the third largest federal support in our schools and provided \$26.1 million to our state's schools and libraries in 2015, the latest year for which the information is available

Chairman Pai, we know you have roots in our great state and we commend you for your commitment to E-Rate and connectivity and your understanding of the unique opportunities and obstacles our rural schools can face when it comes to internet access. Without adequate E-Rate funding, many funding strapped Kansas school districts will be left without the appropriate connectivity to support students needs. As the FCC, under your leadership, moves forward with considering changes to E-Rate, we must acknowledge that E-Rate is a program that is succeeding at its mission. We implore you and your colleagues to remain focused on the fact that E-Rate is a program that works. Any changes to the E-Rate program should be focused on expanding a successful program that has yet to reach its full potential and ensuring the FCC remains a good steward of the changes adopted in 2014, allowing those changes to progress and play out as intended. E-Rate played a critical role in the rapid and significant expansion of connectivity in schools and the 2014 modernization was a much needed update to ensure more schools and libraries are connected to broadband. The E-Rate's investment in Category 2 Wi-Fi and internal connections funding is extremely valuable to Kansas schools and libraries and our constituents would not be able to replace the E-Rate funds with school, district, or state funds.

United School Administrators of Kansas
Kansas Association of School Boards
Kansas National Educational Association
Kansas School Superintendents Association
Kansas Association of Secondary School Principals
Kansas Association of Elementary School Principals
Kansas Association of School Business Officials
Kansas Association of Middle School Administrators